Table of Contents

1. ---

[image]

also uhh before I start. I really hope this isn't ooc for any of these characters hshshsjnmnnn . Also the cover art is mine

thanks for reading if you do , and if y'all want a sequel or something pls say so

-hib

Longtail lay in the branches of a Maple tree, high above the camp entrance. Sometimes he just liked knowing whatever was going on- and he had overheard many interesting conversations from this spot. He looked up, seeing just the tips of barren branches and a clear, cold, blue sky.

"Come ooon, Thornpaw had already learned the back kick, why can't I learn it now?" Longtail's ears pricked as he heard Cinderpaw's voice below him. The blue-gray apprentice and her fire-colored mentor were most likely walking back from some training session. He honestly didn't know what he thought of either of them. Cinderpaw was slightly annoying to him but she had more motivation than all the other apprentices combined. And Fireheart? Longtail felt bad about what he had said to the Tom many moons ago. He became a warrior less than a moon before Fireheart joined the clan, he was barely more than an apprentice. And besides, Fireheart was kind of c-

Longtail shook his head. What? No, he didn't think Fireheart was attractive.

Longtail wondered how he would do himself with an apprentice. They seemed like a lot of work-

Fireheart sighed. "Cinderpaw, that was because you've done battle

training multiple times in a row. You need to work on your hunting." Fireheart's eyelids were lowered in the perpetual "I'm super annoyed" expression that he had started to wear lately. Cinderpaw grunted and skipped into camp. Fireheart paused for a moment.

"Need any help with that apprentice of yours?" Longtail said, hopping down from the tree. He hadn't really had a proper conversation with Fireheart- not after the incident with his ear.

Fireheart turned around, his face even redder than his fur. "What? No, I have Cinderpaw under control. She just can be annoying, that's all." Longtail shrugged.

"Why are you talking to me anyways? I thought you hated me or something."

Aaaaand there it is. Longtail was half expecting for Fireheart to say that. He paused for a moment, thinking of what to say.

"I..." he frowned. "I'm sorry for what I said to you when you first joined the clan. You've clearly shown that you're just as good as- better than any of the other warriors here."

He flattened his ears, waiting for Fireheart to reject his apology.

"Wow...." he looked up, seeing Fireheart's face turn to a soft smile. "Thank you. I really didn't expect you to say this, you didn't need to apologize-" Longtail chuckled.

"You're welcome." Before he could say anything else, he heard a low voice in the clearing call his name.

"Longtail? Where the starclan are you!?" He heard Darkstripe call. Shoot. He didn't want Darkstripe to know he was talking to Fireheart.

"Uh, sorry, I have to go!" He said as he sped around the camp wall and burst into camp from another place. Tigerclaw was sitting next to Darkstripe.

"What took you so long?" His mouth was curled into something Longtail could only describe as a half-snarl. He could see the deputy's sharp white teeth. Now that he thought about it- what was the point of following him?

"I was training, Tigerclaw," Longtail said, fully knowing that

statement was false. Tigerclaw stared at him for a moment then flicked his tail, falling for Longtail's little lie.

Everything was a dark blue, nearly completely absorbed by the thick darkness of night. The only thing that broke it up was the pale light emitted from the moon and many stars. Longtail was up in the tree again, stargazing. He liked to wonder about who each star was, where they were from, and what their life was like. He had only decided on around thirty at that point, and there were a ton more. Thirty one was-

Suddenly he the scampering of climbing paws and swishing branches. He sat up, surprised.

"I hope this isn't a bad time or anything."

Longtail snorted.

"Well Fireheart, I didn't think you would be up this late." He raised an eyebrow at Longtail's comment.

"That statement is incorrect, but whatever." Longtail watched (still slightly shocked) as Firestar laid down on one of the branches next to him, turning to gaze at Longtail. "So, what do you do up here?"

"I..." Longtail laughed nervously. "I just like to look at the stars. They don't judge when you stare at them, unlike our clanmates."

Fireheart stared at him for a moment, then broke out in laughter.

"True! I looked at Tigerclaw once for like, one second, and he hissed at me! What a jerk, honestly."

Fireheart's eyes grew wide, realizing what he said. "Oh my gosh, I'm so sorry, please don't tell Tigerclaw I said that-" Longtail lay his tail on Fireheart's shoulder.

"No! You're fine- I think Tigerclaw is kind of a jerk too." Those words should have felt terrible coming out of his mouth, like vomit or something.

But they didn't. They felt.... right? He turned to Fireheart and smiled.

"Honestly, I like you a lot more than him."